



# Creative Communities

## Grant Program

Phase 1 Guidelines  
Fiscal Year 2025

*This program is supported with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts*



**Purpose:**

The Creative Communities grants program encourages arts education, cultural understanding, and community arts development in Wisconsin. It provides support for projects that the applicant does *with* the community rather than just *for* the community, and that further the Arts Board’s goals in the following three areas: [Arts Education](#), [Folk and Traditional Arts](#), or [Local Arts](#).

Applicants are welcome to submit one proposal to one of these three categories per year. For a full overview of the Creative Community Program guidelines for Phase 1 and Phase 2, see the [Creative Communities webpage](#).

**Eligibility:**

Applicants must:

1. have been doing mission-related work for three years prior to application, and
2. either hold tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or be part of a larger nonprofit institution or a unit of state, local, or tribal government including public schools and universities.

If the applicant does not hold tax exempt status, it may apply using a separate nonprofit organization as a fiscal receiver.

Further information on the [Creative Communities Eligibility Requirements](#) is available within the Creative Communities webpages. *Note: WAB Creation and Presentation grant recipients may not apply to the Creative Communities program (and vice versa).*

FY25 Phase 1 Timeline	
<b>February 15, 2024</b>	12:15pm virtual Q&A session for applicants*
<b>February 15, 2024</b>	New applicants to WAB’s Creative Communities program must notify the Arts Board of their <b>intent to apply</b> by this date. Notification should be in the form of an email to <a href="mailto:artsboard@wisconsin.gov">artsboard@wisconsin.gov</a> .
<b>February 22, 2024 by 3pm</b>	Electronic submission deadline for Phase 1 applications
<b>March 8, 2024</b>	Eligible applicants are invited to submit a Phase 2 application
March 14, 2024	12:15pm virtual Q&A session for Phase 2 applicants*
April 4, 2024 by 3pm	Deadline for Phase 2 electronic application form
April 2024	Panel Meetings
July 1, 2024	Activities on which grant can be spent, begin (no earlier than)
June 30, 2025	Activities on which grant can be spent, end (no later than)
<p>*<b>Virtual Q&amp;A</b> - Use this time to ask questions of WAB staff and hear other applicants’ questions. Use this link to register for the Q&amp;A session: <a href="https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0tdeuvqjgvGtEtbFlzf-cNpDY5tjmPRsC4">https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0tdeuvqjgvGtEtbFlzf-cNpDY5tjmPRsC4</a>. While this session is not required, it is encouraged.</p>	

**Please note:** While funds should be available on July 1, grant checks may not arrive until as late as October, depending on State Legislative and Administrative action. If your project occurs before October, please contact staff to discuss the impact this may have on your project.

### **Grant Amounts:**

Grants will range from a minimum of \$1,500 to a maximum of \$6,000. A 1:1 match, half of which must be cash, is required from the applicant for these funds. (The amount of the grant request cannot be more than half the overall budget of the project.)

### **To Apply:**

New applicants to WAB's Creative Communities program must send an email to [artsboard@wisconsin.gov](mailto:artsboard@wisconsin.gov) by February 15, 2024, stating their intent to apply and providing a phone number at which they can be reached if WAB staff has questions.

All applicants must complete the Phase 1 application form and submit it electronically by **Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 3:00 pm** to the Wisconsin Arts Board. Late Phase 1 applications will not be accepted. It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit the application by the deadline day and time.

The federal government, through the National Endowment for the Arts, requires all WAB grant applicants to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). To obtain your organization's UEI, follow the instructions at <https://SAM.gov/content/entity-registration>. The UEI is a required part of your Creative Communities grant application.

### New applicant organizations

Organizations that have not previously registered within the WAB online application system (SmartSimple) must:

- Click the 'Register' button at the bottom of the page and complete registration.
  - Your new user information will be emailed to the address you provide within your registration within 10 minutes. Please activate immediately. The password will expire.
  - **Please note:** If you are a new contact for an organization that has applied to this program using the online grants system (SmartSimple) in the past, please contact WAB staff at [artsboard@wisconsin.gov](mailto:artsboard@wisconsin.gov).
  - Follow the steps outlined below.

### Organizations that are registered within the WAB online application system

1. Log-in to WAB's Online Application System (<http://wab.smartsimple.com/>)
2. After logging in, click 'Funding Opportunities,' and choose Creative Communities.
3. Complete the **Applicant Information** tab and click the 'Save Draft' button at the bottom of the page.
4. Click the round letter icon in the top righthand corner of the form and select '**Organizational Profile.**' Complete/update:
  - a. the UEI information
  - b. the Mission Statement
  - c. the Brief Organizational History sectionAfter completing/updating, click on the 'Save' button at the bottom of the page.

5. Complete the application form, clicking 'Save Draft' at the end of each page.
  - Be sure to address each of the points requested within the **Project Summary** (450-word maximum).
6. When finished, click 'Submit.' *Reminder: **Submission deadline is 3pm, February 22, 2024.***
7. You will receive a confirmation email once your submission has been accepted.

Panelists will evaluate your application based primarily on your 450-word project summary, using the following criteria.

**Phase 1 Evaluation Criteria:**

- 1) Project aligns with the purpose of the Creative Communities program and the goals for the relevant component.
  - [Arts Education goals](#)
  - [Local Arts goals](#)
  - [Folk and Traditional Arts goals](#)
- 2) Project's artistic merit and/or educational/cultural value is strong.
- 3) Level of community participation and accessibility is high.
- 4) An extra point will be awarded to projects that the grant application review panel identifies as especially creative/innovative/timely.

**Grant Proposal Writing Assistance:** Arts Board staff is available to provide grant proposal assistance throughout the year. Call (608) 266-0190 or email [artsboard@wisconsin.gov](mailto:artsboard@wisconsin.gov).